

# DRUG INTERDICTION

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## General Government Division

B-241634

December 11, 1990

The Honorable Sam Nunn  
Chairman, Permanent Subcommittee  
on Investigations  
Committee on Governmental Affairs  
United States Senate



Dear Mr. Chairman:

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This report responds to your request for information on federal programs to interdict illicit drugs being smuggled into the United States. These programs are designed to stop smugglers and/or their shipments at the borders by focusing on the mode of transportation used by smugglers and are thus referred to as land, marine, air, and commercial cargo interdiction programs. You were concerned that information indicating which interdiction programs work and which do not is not available to help Congress allocate federal resources in the drug war.

As agreed with the Subcommittee, our objectives were to provide information on (1) the available measures of drug interdiction program performance and whether performance can be compared between different programs, (2) funding for the interdiction programs, (3) quantities of drugs seized through the interdiction programs, and (4) the relationship between drug seizures and the use of advance information (prior intelligence) on the drug shipments.

## Results in Brief

Although the federal agencies and the Office of National Drug Control Policy monitor drug interdiction program accomplishments and costs, they have not yet identified a good way to measure and compare the performance of different programs. This is recognized as a long-standing problem that has proven difficult to resolve. For example, while the agencies generally view increased seizures as an indicator of program success, a decrease in seizures does not necessarily mean a program is less effective than it was previously or less effective than other programs making more seizures. Such decreases may be due to a variety of factors that could be equated with a program's success, such as that the drug interdiction programs may have deterred some smugglers from bringing illegal drugs into our country and/or caused other smugglers to switch from one mode of transportation to another or to change their tactics. Because good measures of program performance have yet to be developed, it is not possible to determine accurately whether resources are being appropriately allocated to fight the drug war.



Available data indicate that total drug interdiction funding has increased about 40 percent (to over \$2 billion) in fiscal year 1990 over the funding that the federal agencies—Customs Service, the Coast Guard, the Border Patrol, and the Department of Defense (DOD)—received for drug interdiction in fiscal year 1989. From fiscal years 1987 through 1989, the quantities of drugs seized by these agencies varied. For example, while the amount of marijuana seized by the Border Patrol interdiction program in 1989 was more than double that seized in 1987, the amount seized by the Coast Guard program was down about 76 percent over the same period. The types of drugs seized during that period also varied—the quantity of marijuana seized decreased by about 58 percent, and the quantity of cocaine seized increased by about 103 percent. According to the agency officials, prior intelligence was involved in several drug seizures included in our sample of larger seizures, but most seizures occurred during routine interdiction.

## Background

In general, drug interdiction involves detecting potential smugglers and/or their cargoes, sorting smugglers from legitimate travelers, intercepting and tracking them to the final destination, and apprehending them. To do this, the federal government has established interdiction programs, which are run by Customs, the Coast Guard, and the Border Patrol, with assistance provided by DOD.

The federal drug interdiction programs carried out by these agencies focus on particular modes of transportation used by smugglers. Customs has an air, a marine, and an inspection and control drug interdiction program. Under the inspection and control program, Customs is responsible for drug interdiction in commercial cargo and on persons entering and leaving the United States. The Border Patrol's interdiction program focuses on the land transportation mode, and the Coast Guard's program has a combined air/marine focus. Support activities to assist the agencies in their interdiction responsibilities are provided by DOD. Although generally prohibited by law from direct participation in an interdiction, search and seizure, or arrest, DOD is the lead federal agency for the detection and monitoring of aerial and maritime transit of illegal drugs into the United States. DOD is also authorized to provide law enforcement officials with support, such as equipment and personnel. In addition, information on drug smuggling activities is provided to law enforcement agencies by the Drug Enforcement Administration's El Paso Intelligence Center.

The Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988 established, among other things, the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) in the Executive Office of the President. The Director, ONDCP, is responsible for developing and implementing a national drug control strategy, including a complete list of goals, objectives, and priorities for reducing the supply of and demand for drugs. In this role, ONDCP has close and continuing contact with federal agencies involved in the "drug war," including the interdiction agencies.

Setting budget priorities is a responsibility of ONDCP. It sets priorities for federal efforts, and reviews and certifies that drug budget submissions to ONDCP from the agencies are adequate to implement the objectives of the National Drug Strategy. Certainty in deciding budget priorities and where resources should be allocated is dependent on knowing how well the interdiction programs are doing.

## Objectives, Scope, and Methodology

The objectives of this report are to provide the following information:

- a description of available measures of drug interdiction program performance and whether such measures can be used to compare the performance of the different interdiction programs,
- the funding for each interdiction program for fiscal years 1989 and 1990,
- the quantities of drugs seized during fiscal years 1987 through 1989, and
- information on fiscal year 1989 drug seizures attributable to agencies having prior intelligence on the illegal drug shipments.

To obtain background information on the interdiction programs and to identify the types and sources of available information, we interviewed headquarters officials at Customs, the Border Patrol, the Coast Guard, DOD, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, ONDCP, and Interpol.

Regarding measurement of interdiction program performance, we met with officials from each interdiction program and ONDCP to discuss what indicators are used to measure program performance and how well they measure that performance. To understand program operations, we visited the Border Patrol and Customs units in El Paso, Texas, and the Customs marine enforcement and seaport commercial cargo inspection

facilities in Miami, Florida. We also met with Border Interdiction Committee representatives in Washington, D.C. This committee was established in 1987 to coordinate the writing of a strategy for drug interdiction under the auspices of the National Drug Policy Board, one of the predecessors to ONDCP. It has become a forum where federal interdiction agency representatives meet monthly to discuss policy and operations coordination. We also visited the Drug Enforcement Administration's El Paso Intelligence Center and Operation Alliance in El Paso, Texas. Operation Alliance provides for coordinating multiagency efforts to interdict drugs and other illegal contraband along the United States-Mexico border.

We obtained budget data from the Border Patrol, Customs, the Coast Guard, DOD, the Office of Management and Budget, and ONDCP. Budget data are shown only for fiscal years 1989 and 1990 because these were the most recent years for which comparable data were available.

We obtained drug seizure data from the Border Patrol, Customs, and the Coast Guard for fiscal years 1987 through 1989. DOD is generally prohibited from making drug seizures and apprehensions. The seizure data covered the most recent years for which each interdiction program had readily available information.

To examine the role that prior intelligence played in the amount of drugs seized, we obtained lists of drug seizures made during fiscal year 1989 from Customs, the Coast Guard, and the Border Patrol. We limited these lists to cocaine and marijuana seizures because these were the two drugs for which all agencies maintained seizure data. Since the Subcommittee was primarily interested in larger seizures, we further restricted the universe for review to seizures above selected numbers of pounds, as shown in table 1. Seizures of these sizes were considered to be significant by the agencies. To further focus on the larger seizures, we limited the list of commercial cargo seizures to containerized cargo seizures. The universe that we identified totaled 903 seizures and was selected from listings of seizures provided to us by the agencies. Because of problems we discovered with Customs' marine seizure data, we excluded this program from the prior intelligence portion of our study.<sup>1</sup> This resulted in a final universe of 833 seizures.

<sup>1</sup>During our review, we became aware of inconsistencies in seizure data provided by Customs' marine program officials. For example, of three drug seizures listed as Customs' marine seizures, two were actually Coast Guard seizures and one was a Customs air program seizure.

**Table 1: Drug Threshold Criteria for Sample Universe**

<b>Agency/program</b>	<b>Cocaine (lbs.)</b>	<b>Marijuana (lbs.)</b>
Customs' air program	1	1
Customs' marine program	100	1,000
Customs' commercial cargo program	140	300
Border Patrol	1	190
Coast Guard	1	1

Within each interdiction program, we judgmentally selected seizures for review. While the sampling process was judgmental to ensure the inclusion of the largest seizures plus a selection of smaller seizures, we had no foreknowledge of whether prior intelligence or routine interdiction prompted the seizure. From the universe of 833 seizures, we judgmentally selected a total sample of 136 seizures from the 4 interdiction programs and obtained and reviewed information on the use of prior intelligence for these seizures. We obtained the information through a structured data collection instrument on which agency officials indicated whether each seizure was the result of prior intelligence or routine interdiction. The results obtained cannot be generalized beyond the particular cases studied.

We did not verify the accuracy of the data provided by the agencies. We did our work from August 1989 to August 1990 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.

## **Drug Interdiction Programs Lack Criteria to Compare Performance**

Drug interdiction program funding has increased and, according to ONDCP officials, there has been no effort to compare performance of different interdiction programs because of the lack of comparable criteria. They said that comparisons are not feasible because of the nature of the programs, shortcomings in the existing data, and the fact that each program is unique. However, at the agency level, officials said they do attempt to measure the performance of their own interdiction programs by using a variety of indicators.

## **Measurement Problems**

Agency officials recognize that there are problems in measuring the performance of drug interdiction programs. For example, they said that the amount of illegal drugs crossing our borders is not known; the deterrent effect of interdiction programs is difficult to measure; there is double

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counting among agencies of the quantities of drugs seized; and it is difficult to quantify interdiction efforts in relation to results when an agency's primary mission may be other than drug interdiction.

Without knowing the amount of illegal drugs being smuggled across our national borders, neither the percentage of illegal drugs being interdicted nor the effectiveness of the interdiction programs in reducing the amount of illegal drugs can be readily determined. We pointed out in a special report<sup>2</sup> that data used to prepare estimates of drug availability and consumption are generally not designed to measure program effectiveness.

Measuring the deterrent effect of interdiction programs is another problem. Agency officials believed that the existence of drug interdiction programs does deter some smugglers from bringing illegal drugs into our country and causes other smugglers to switch from one mode of transportation to another or change their tactics. One example, according to various agency officials, is the air interdiction program, which they believed has caused smugglers, who previously flew illegal drug cargoes into Florida, to now fly their cargoes into northern Mexico and move their drugs by land across our southwest border. Agency officials believed that all of the interdiction programs have some deterrent effect but conceded that it is difficult to measure the impact of deterrence.

Another measurement problem concerns the data reporting procedures of the drug interdiction agencies. When a drug seizure results from the coordinated efforts of more than one agency, any and all agencies involved in the seizure may record the seizure. Agency officials said that the rationale for this "double counting" is that each agency involved expended resources and therefore should be entitled to include the results in its statistics. While agency officials acknowledged the practice, data are not now available on how often or in which instances this double counting occurs.

Finally, it is difficult to assess the effect of an interdiction program when an agency's primary mission is other than drug interdiction. For example, the Coast Guard has several major roles, ranging from "search and rescue" to "maritime law enforcement," with drug interdiction being part of its broader responsibilities. Thus, when the Coast Guard boards a vessel and makes a drug seizure, that boarding may be made

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<sup>2</sup>Controlling Drug Abuse: A Status Report (GAO/GGD-88-39, Mar. 1, 1988).

for the purpose of enforcing U.S. laws and treaties and not solely for drug interdiction purposes. For the Coast Guard, and for other multipurpose agencies, it is difficult to separate the routine costs of carrying out primary missions from interdiction costs or to attribute a seizure to the interdiction effort as distinct from the primary mission. Yet, for more informed budgeting or resource allocation decisions, such attributions would be required. We discussed the difficulties in making such attributions in a recent report.<sup>3</sup>

Even when a program's purpose is clearly interdiction, the cost effectiveness of interdiction alternatives is not easily determined. This is because seizure data currently available reflect only the results from successful interdiction attempts, not unsuccessful ones. It is not known how many cases of prior intelligence failed to uncover drugs nor how many staff hours were expended on each interdiction attempt. If agencies maintained these data, decisionmakers would have a better basis for understanding outcomes and be able to make more informed judgments about allocation of scarce resources.

### Agencies Use Different Indicators to Measure Performance

Each interdiction agency attempts to measure the performance of its own interdiction program. Most of these assessments consist of year-to-year comparisons of drug seizures. However, the Customs air program goes beyond this and attempts to measure total air program results. Customs officials have developed a series of indicators associated with air smuggling activities, such as drug-related aircraft seizures, that are intended to measure the overall effectiveness of its air interdiction program, including the deterrent effect. Customs is continuing to develop this system. (See app. I for a description of the different program assessments.)

### Federal Funds Budgeted for Interdiction Have Increased

The federal budget for drug interdiction increased from \$1.47 billion in fiscal year 1989 to about \$2.03 billion in fiscal year 1990, an increase of about 40 percent, with the largest increases going to DOD and Customs. DOD funding increased from \$356.7 million in fiscal year 1989 to \$793.5 million in fiscal year 1990. The amount budgeted for Customs increased from \$427.0 million to \$512.9 million over this same time period. (See tables II.1, II.5, II.7, and II.9 for budget authority figures by fiscal year.)

<sup>3</sup>Developing a Federal Drug Budget: Implementing the Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988 (GAO/ GGD-90-104, Aug. 23, 1990).



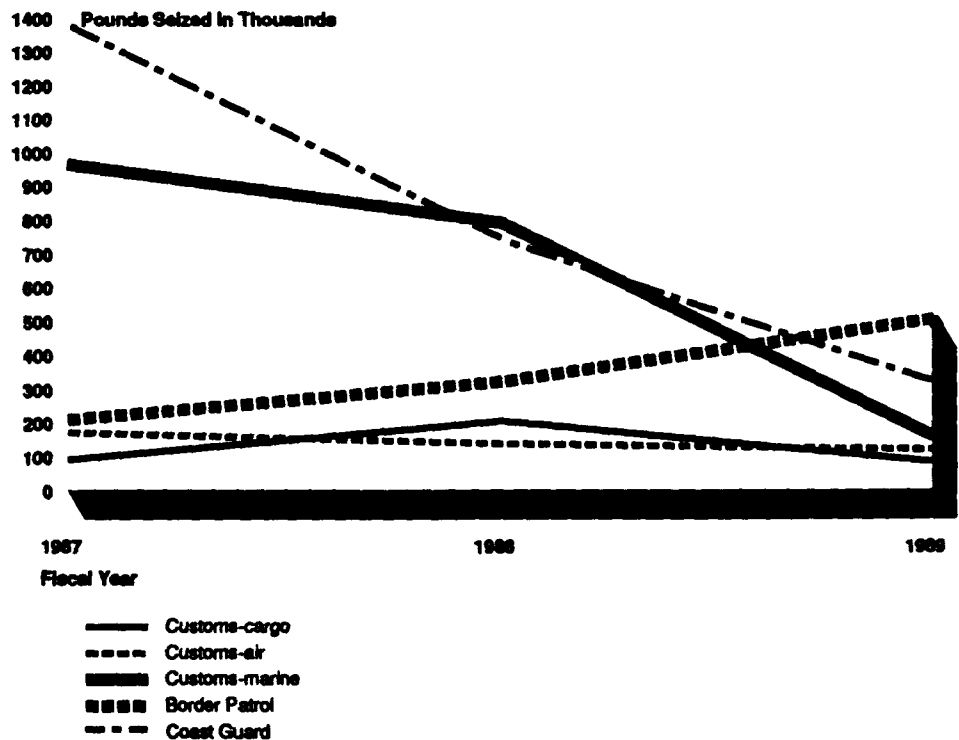
## Quantities of Drugs Seized Varied by Program and Type of Drug

Except for the Border Patrol, the quantity of marijuana seized decreased between fiscal years 1987 and 1989. Cocaine seizures for all programs increased during this time period. (See figs. 1 and 2 and tables II.2, II.3, II.4, II.6, and II.8 for drug seizure information by fiscal year.)

An increase in the quantity of drugs seized is considered an indicator of a drug interdiction program's success. However, a decrease in the quantity of drugs seized does not mean that a program is less effective than it was previously or less effective than other interdiction programs seizing more drugs. It could mean that smugglers are switching to other modes of transportation to get their illegal drugs into the United States.

A specific example of the quantity of drugs seized varying between interdiction programs is the Border Patrol and Coast Guard interdiction programs. The quantity of marijuana seized by the Border Patrol interdiction program in fiscal year 1989 was more than double that seized in fiscal year 1987. Conversely, the quantity of marijuana seized by the Coast Guard interdiction program went down about 76 percent over this same time period.

Figure 1: Quantity of Marijuana Seized



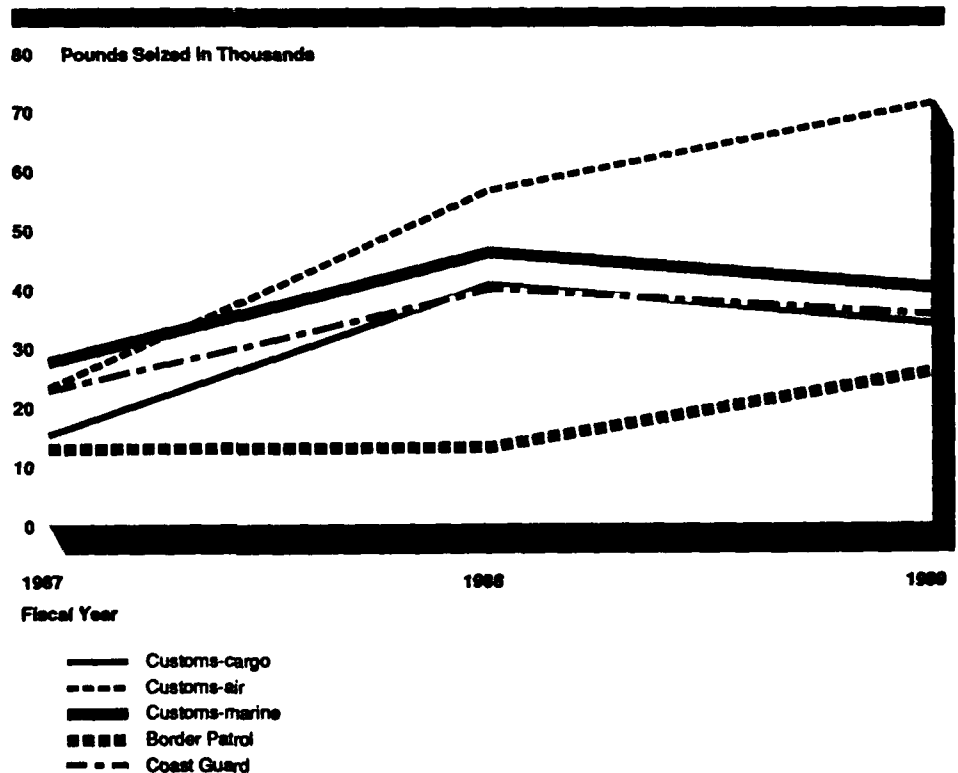
Notes: Quantities shown for Customs' cargo program only include seizures from commercial cargo.

The aggregate total of drugs seized by the individual Customs drug interdiction programs does not equal the Customs national total because of discrepancies between the individual programs' recording systems and Customs' national recording system.

Quantities shown for the Border Patrol include all marijuana seized, including quantities that were less than the threshold criteria used for our prior intelligence sample.

Sources: Customs, Coast Guard, and Border Patrol.

Figure 2: Quantity of Cocaine Seized



Note: The aggregate total of drugs seized by the individual Customs drug interdiction programs does not equal the Customs national total because of discrepancies between the individual programs' recording systems and Customs' national recording system.

Sources: Customs, Coast Guard, and Border Patrol.

## Prior Intelligence Involved in Seizures

Prior intelligence refers to having specific details on a particular drug shipment—for example, a description of the smugglers and/or conveyance, or the specific date and location of a shipment—before it reaches the U.S. borders. This intelligence could come from such sources as informants and investigative work.

Within our sample we found differences among programs and their use of prior intelligence, although the findings are not generalizable to the programs overall. For example, our sample results showed that the Coast Guard used prior intelligence in 8 out of the 9 cocaine seizures and 8 out of the 10 marijuana seizures that we reviewed. For both drugs, the seizures that resulted from prior intelligence accounted for over 90 percent of the quantity of drugs seized (see app. III).

In contrast, our sample results also showed that none of the other interdiction programs used prior intelligence in a majority of their seizures. For example, the Customs commercial cargo program used prior intelligence in 1 out of the 10 cocaine seizures that we reviewed, accounting for 5 percent of the seized quantity of drugs. The program used prior intelligence in one out of the eight marijuana seizures in our sample, and this seizure accounted for 18 percent of the seized quantity of drugs.

Our sample results on prior intelligence were consistent across drug types. For both marijuana and cocaine, the Coast Guard used prior intelligence in the majority of seizures, followed by the Customs air program, the Border Patrol, and the Customs commercial cargo program.

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## Conclusions

Drug interdiction programs established by the Coast Guard, Customs, and the Border Patrol, with support provided by DOD, are designed to stop smugglers and/or their shipments before they arrive in the United States or at U.S. borders by focusing on the mode of transportation. While available data indicate that funding for these programs in fiscal year 1990 has increased by about 40 percent, to more than \$2 billion, over that budgeted for fiscal year 1989, it is difficult to measure and compare performance among the programs. This is because, while increased seizures are generally viewed as an indicator of program success, a decrease in seizures does not necessarily mean a program is less effective than it was previously or less effective than other programs making more seizures. Such decreases may be due to other factors—programs may have deterred some smugglers from bringing illicit drugs into our country or caused other smugglers to switch from one mode of transportation to another. Because of these difficulties, no one can be certain whether resources are being appropriately allocated among the various drug interdiction programs.

Our sample results showed that most drug seizures were due to routine interdiction, but that the relationship between seizures and the use of prior intelligence varies according to the particular interdiction program. Only the Coast Guard used prior intelligence in a majority of the seizures included in our sample.

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## Agency Comments

We discussed a draft of this report with officials of Customs, the Coast Guard, the Border Patrol, DOD, and ONDCP. These officials generally

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agreed with the information presented, and we incorporated their comments where appropriate.

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As arranged with the Subcommittee, we plan no further distribution of this report until 30 days after the date of this letter, unless you publicly release its contents earlier. After 30 days, we will send copies to the Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy; the U.S. Attorney General; and the Secretaries of Defense, Treasury, and Transportation, and will make copies available to others upon request.

The major contributors to this report are listed in appendix IV. If you have any questions about the report, please call me at 275-8389.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lowell Dodge". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name and title.

Lowell Dodge  
Director, Administration  
of Justice Issues



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## Abbreviations

DOD	Department of Defense
GAO	General Accounting Office
ONDCP	Office of National Drug Control Policy



# Agencies Use Different Indicators to Measure Performance

Each interdiction agency attempts to measure the performance of its own drug interdiction programs. Generally, these assessments include a comparison of drugs seized on a year-to-year basis. The U.S. Customs Service, however, has designed a system to measure the performance of its air interdiction program using aircraft seizures and other program indicators.

## U.S. Customs Service

Customs operates three interdiction programs. Each is evaluated independently of the others using different indicators to measure performance. For example, the air interdiction program uses several indicators associated with drug smuggling activity, which include reports of planes flying into U.S. air space at the national borders, aircraft seizures, aircraft crashes, stolen aircraft, and the number of law enforcement alert messages for suspicious aircraft.

These indicators are numerically weighted and consolidated to graphically form a "threat level," which represents the airborne drug smuggling threat to different areas of the United States. The air program has divided the U.S. borders into sectors to geographically identify where border intrusions are occurring. This information has been used to reallocate air resources to areas showing indications of increased smuggling activity or to determine whether additional resources are needed and where they should be located. The information has also been used as indicators of the deterrent effect of Customs' air interdiction program. For example, according to a Customs prepared document, the graphic portrayal of the smuggling threat compared to the level of resources assigned to the Customs air interdiction program over time has shown a correlation between the expanding resources and a diminishing smuggling threat.

Recently, Customs contracted with two vendors to study the validity of its air interdiction program's assessment system. An agency official said the studies have been completed; one report has been issued and one report is still in draft form. The official said that both studies confirmed that the indicators and how they are used by Customs' air interdiction program are valid, but the reports make recommendations for further refinements to the system.

Customs' marine program is responsible for carrying out smuggling investigations, such as undercover or sting operations, as a means to accomplish its overall mission, including its drug interdiction responsibilities. Because of this, officials said it is difficult to evaluate drug

interdiction by itself. Several indicators are used to measure the success of the total marine program. These include the number of drug seizures and amounts seized, how frequently Customs vessels are used, and the number of investigations that target groups associated with marine smuggling. The assessment for the marine program is based on the expenditure of resources compared to the amount of drug seizures and the number and types of investigations carried out.

Customs' inspection and control commercial cargo program uses quantity of drugs seized as an indicator to measure performance. Factors that affect the quantity seized include the number of containers inspected, the number of commercial cargo carriers that participate in inspecting containers for drugs prior to shipment (participating carriers have cooperative arrangements with Customs and examine their own vessels for illegal drugs), and the enforcement criteria used to decide which containers to inspect, such as the country where the shipment originated and the product being shipped.

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## **U.S. Coast Guard**

The Coast Guard measures the performance of its interdiction program through the quantity of drugs seized; the number of seizures; and the number of boardings, arrests, and vessels seized. In determining the performance, the agency looks at the entire interdiction picture, including other indicators such as street price and level of purity of cocaine and marijuana. If drug seizures are down and the level of effort is up, as was the situation in 1989, the agency concludes that its interdiction program is effective and that smugglers have been deterred or have changed tactics.

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## **U.S. Border Patrol**

The Border Patrol's primary mission is the apprehension of illegal aliens, not the seizure of illegal drugs. Drugs are seized as a by-product of stopping illegal aliens crossing U.S. borders. The Border Patrol prepares a monthly report that it uses to judge its overall performance and identify locations where more or fewer resources are needed. The report contains such data as alien apprehensions, the number of drug seizures, and the number of Border Patrol hours worked at each location. The assessment is based upon the amount of resources used and the amount of seizures and alien apprehensions made.

# Financial and Drug Seizure Information

**Table II.1: U.S. Customs Service Drug Interdiction Budget, Fiscal Years 1989 and 1990**

Dollars in millions		
Interdiction program budget authority	Fiscal Year	
	1989 actual	1990 estimate
Commercial cargo <sup>a</sup>	\$11.3	\$35.3
Air	184.7 <sup>b</sup>	287.3 <sup>b</sup>
Marine	58.7	44.0
Inspection and control <sup>a</sup>	59.6 <sup>c</sup>	56.1 <sup>d</sup>
Amount for drug interdiction not identified to program	112.7 <sup>e</sup>	90.3 <sup>f</sup>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$427.0</b>	<b>\$513.0<sup>g</sup></b>

<sup>a</sup>The commercial cargo interdiction program is part of Customs' inspection and control operations. Also included in inspection and control operations is passenger processing, canine enforcement (drug detection dog program), and overhead. Budget authority shown for commercial cargo only includes those amounts budgeted for cargo examination. The balance of inspection and control budget authority is listed separately.

<sup>b</sup>These amounts include air operations and maintenance costs and salaries and expenses.

<sup>c</sup>Included in this amount is passenger processing (\$42.3 million); canine enforcement (\$9.8 million); and overhead (\$7.5 million).

<sup>d</sup>Included in this amount is passenger processing (\$39.1 million); canine enforcement (\$8.6 million); and overhead (\$8.4 million).

<sup>e</sup>Included in this amount is interdiction investigation (\$8.9 million) and overhead (\$10.7 million); support (\$37.8 million); and the seized assets Forfeiture Fund (\$55.3 million). These amounts could not be identified to a specific Customs drug interdiction program.

<sup>f</sup>Included in this amount is interdiction investigation (\$6.7 million) and overhead (\$12.5 million); support (\$31.2 million); and Forfeiture Fund (\$39.9 million). These amounts could not be identified to a specific Customs drug interdiction program.

<sup>g</sup>Total difference from ONDCP budget summary is due to rounding.

Sources: Customs and National Drug Control Strategy Budget Summary, Jan. 1990.

**Table II.2: U.S. Customs Service Drug Seizure Information—Inspection and Control Commercial Cargo Interdiction Program, Fiscal Years 1987, 1988, and 1989**

Drug type	FY 1987		FY 1988		FY 1989	
	No. of seizures	Quantity	No. of seizures	Quantity	No. of seizures	Quantity
Marijuana	57	90,762	58	205,574	75	83,976
Cocaine	30	15,234	57	40,630	74	33,784
<b>Total</b>	<b>87</b>		<b>115</b>		<b>149</b>	

Notes: The aggregate total of drugs seized by the individual Customs' drug interdiction programs—air, marine, and commercial cargo—does not equal the Customs national total because of discrepancies between the individual programs' recording systems and Customs' national recording system.

Number of seizures and quantities seized represent only those seizures from commercial cargo.

Source: Customs.

**Appendix II**  
**Financial and Drug Seizure Information**

**Table II.3: U.S. Customs Service Drug Seizure Information—Air Interdiction Program, Fiscal Years 1987, 1988, and 1989**

Quantity in pounds			
Drug type	Fiscal Year		
	1987	1988	1989
Marijuana quantity seized	170,943	137,490	120,511
Cocaine quantity seized	23,240	56,545	71,104
Total number of seizures <sup>a</sup>	139	219	203

Notes: Table data represent all drug-related seizures in which Customs' air interdiction program resources were involved, i.e., seizures made solely by Customs' air interdiction personnel plus seizures in which Customs' air interdiction personnel were participants.

The aggregate total of drugs seized by the individual Customs drug interdiction programs—air, marine, and commercial cargo—does not equal the Customs national total because of discrepancies between the individual programs' recording systems and Customs' national recording system.

<sup>a</sup>Number of seizures by type of drug was not available.

Source: Customs.

**Table II.4: U.S. Customs Service Drug Seizure Information—Marine Interdiction Program, Fiscal Years 1987, 1988, and 1989**

Quantity in pounds			
Drug type	Fiscal Year		
	1987	1988	1989
Marijuana quantity seized	963,638	790,921	159,378
Cocaine quantity seized	27,519	46,020	39,897

Notes: Table data represent all drug-related seizures in which Customs' marine interdiction program resources were involved, i.e., seizures made solely by Customs' marine interdiction personnel plus seizures in which Customs' marine interdiction personnel were participants.

The aggregate total of drugs seized by the individual Customs' drug interdiction programs—air, marine, and commercial cargo—does not equal the Customs' national total because of discrepancies between the individual programs' recording systems and Customs' national recording system.

Source: Customs.

**Table II.5: U.S. Border Patrol Drug Interdiction Budget, Fiscal Years 1989 and 1990**

Dollars in millions		
	Fiscal Year	
	1989 actual	1990 estimate
Drug interdiction budget authority	\$36.9	\$39.4

Source: Immigration and Naturalization Service Budget Office.

**Appendix II**  
**Financial and Drug Seizure Information**

**Table II.6: U.S. Border Patrol Drug Seizure Information, Fiscal Years 1987, 1988, and 1989**

Quantity in pounds

Drug type	FY 1987		FY 1988		FY 1989	
	No. of seizures	Quantity	No. of seizures	Quantity	No. of seizures	Quantity
Marijuana	2,236	209,281	2,458	321,483	4,124	504,616
Cocaine	238	12,813	375	13,006	685	25,732
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,474</b>		<b>2,833</b>		<b>4,809</b>	

Note: The number of drug seizures and quantity seized represent all cocaine and marijuana seizures in which the Border Patrol was involved, i.e., seizures made solely by the Border Patrol and seizures in which the Border Patrol was a participant.

Source: Border Patrol.

**Table II.7: U.S. Coast Guard Drug Interdiction Budget, Fiscal Years 1989 and 1990**

Dollars in millions

	Fiscal Year	
	1989 actual	1990 estimate
Drug interdiction budget authority	\$629.5	\$670.2

Source: National Drug Control Strategy Budget Summary, Jan. 1990.

**Table II.8: U.S. Coast Guard Drug Seizure Information, Fiscal Years 1987, 1988, and 1989**

Quantity in pounds

Drug type	FY 1987		FY 1988		FY 1989	
	No. of seizures	Quantity	No. of seizures	Quantity	No. of seizures	Quantity
Marijuana	222	1,390,864	223	755,352	183	328,020
Cocaine <sup>a</sup>		22,454		38,957		34,786

Note: The number of drug seizures and quantity seized represent all cocaine and marijuana seizures in which the Coast Guard was involved, i.e., seizures made solely by the Coast Guard and seizures in which the Coast Guard was a participant.

<sup>a</sup>Number of seizures for cocaine is not routinely tracked. Separate marijuana seizure data are maintained to track trends relating to the marijuana growing seasons, which occur twice a year.

Source: Coast Guard.

**Appendix II**  
**Financial and Drug Seizure Information**

**Table II.9: Department of Defense Drug  
Interdiction Budget, Fiscal Years 1989  
and 1990**

Dollars in millions

	Fiscal Year	
	1989 actual	1990 estimate
Drug interdiction budget authority	\$356.7	\$793.5

Note: DOD is generally prohibited from direct participation in an interdiction, search and seizure, arrest, or similar activity, but is the lead federal agency for the detection and monitoring of aerial and maritime transit of illegal drugs into the United States. DOD is also authorized to provide support services, such as equipment and personnel, to law enforcement agencies to aid them in carrying out their drug interdiction programs.

Source: Office of the Secretary of Defense, FY 1991 President's Budget Justification of Estimates, Feb. 1990.

# Summary of Sample Results

This appendix summarizes the interdiction agencies' responses to our structured data collection instrument in order to explore the relationship between prior intelligence, interdiction, and seizure size for a judgmentally selected sample of seizures. Table III.1 shows the universe of fiscal year 1989 drug seizures from which we drew our sample (based on larger seizures), the minimum amount of the seizures for inclusion in the sample, the number sampled from each program, the number of seizures in the sample that resulted from prior intelligence and the poundage associated with these seizures, and the number of seizures in the sample that resulted from routine interdiction and the poundage associated with these seizures.

**Table III.1: GAO Sample Results**

Agency/ interdiction program/drug	Seizure universe	Definition of seizure universe	GAO sample seizures	Due to prior intelligence		Due to routine interdiction	
				Seizures	Pounds	Seizures	Pounds
Coast Guard							
Air/marine							
Cocaine	59	1 pound +	9	8	10,980	1	24
Marijuana	61	1 pound +	10	8	141,283	2	12,791
Customs							
Air							
Cocaine	58	1 pound +	9	3	8,503	6	16,113
Marijuana	65	1 pound +	10	3	16,780	7	58,901
Commercial cargo <sup>a</sup>							
Cocaine	10	140 pounds +	10	1	821	9	16,119
Marijuana	8	300 pounds +	8	1	6,000	7	26,794
Border Patrol <sup>b</sup>							
Land							
Cocaine	75	1 pound +	20 <sup>c</sup>	4	1,328	16	12,006
Marijuana	497	190 pounds +	59	9	13,364	50	46,193

<sup>a</sup>Poundage shown for the "definition of seizure universe" was the smallest amount seized for cocaine and the minimum amount that would be recorded for marijuana seizures in containerized cargo in fiscal year 1989.

<sup>b</sup>The Border Patrol gave us a listing of 331 cocaine seizures and 497 marijuana seizures. We limited the cocaine universe by eliminating seizures of less than 1 pound; this gave us a universe of 75 seizures.

<sup>c</sup>Documentation for one cocaine seizure had been destroyed before we requested information on it, so the agency could not provide information as to whether the seizure was due to prior intelligence or routine interdiction. Thus the seizure was eliminated from the sample.

Source: Information for this table was taken from agency-supplied documents, data collection instruments completed by the agencies, and calculations made by GAO.

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